

# MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY INVENTORY, 2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION (MMPI-2)

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# Objectives



- Briefly discuss development of MMPI
- Review test characteristics of the MMPI-2
- Who can and cannot take the MMPI-2?
- Necessary qualifications to administer, score & interpret the instrument
- Application of test results to forensic issues
- MMPI-2 strengths & weaknesses in forensic settings

# Background



- ❖ MMPI originally published in 1943
  - To assist psychiatric diagnosis
  - ~1000 items
  - Utilized empirical criterion keying
  - Innovative: limited face validity
  - Normative sample consisted of medical patients' families and visitors

# MMPI-2



- ❖ MMPI-2 published in 1989
  - Improved norms
  - Item additions, deletions, changes
  - K-correction
  - New scales
  - Several revised test manuals to incorporate new scales
- ❖ Current variations: MMPI-A, MMPI-2-RF

# What is the MMPI-2?



- ❖ Most widely used psychological test instrument in forensic assessments
- ❖ Most widely used personality test in any setting
- ❖ 567 true-false self-report items
- ❖ “elicits a wide-range of self-descriptions scored to give a quantitative measurement of an individual’s level of emotional adjustment and attitude toward test taking” (Groth-Marnat, 2009, p. 207)
- ❖ Useful for clinical and “normal” populations

# Who Can Take the MMPI-2?



- ❖ Normed on nationally representative community sample between 18-80 years of age
- ❖ Note: 18 year olds could take the MMPI-A
  - ❖ Sophistication / maturity
  - ❖ Elevation in MMPI-2 Clinical Scales
- ❖ Requires ability to follow standard instructions
  - ❖ Acute psychiatric impairment
  - ❖ Intoxication / withdrawal

# Reading level



- 5<sup>th</sup> grade reading level (publisher)
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading level (manual; Butcher et al., 2001)
- Many recommend 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level
- Audio recordings available to assist visually impaired or illiterate individuals
- Instrument should *never* be read to the individual (see Edwards, Holmes, & Caravel, 1998)

# Language and Culture



- Available in:
  - ▣ Bulgarian; Chinese; Croatian; Czech; Danish; Dutch/Flemish; French; German; Greek; Hebrew; Hungarian; Italian; Korean; Norwegian; and Swedish
  - ▣ Spanish for Mexico and Central America
  - ▣ Spanish for Spain, South America, and Central America;
- However: cultural factors should be carefully considered before simply translating the instrument



# Who Can Give the MMPI-2?



- ❖ Can be administered by trained secretary, clerk, or technician
- ❖ Should be interpreted by a clinician that has:
  - ❖ Licensure or certification to practice in their state; or
  - ❖ Doctorate degree in psychology, education, or closely related field with formal training in the ethical administration, scoring, and interpretation of clinical assessments related to the intended use of the instrument

# Administering the MMPI-2



- ❖ Establish rapport before administration
- ❖ Follow standard instructions (any deviation threatens validity of results)
- ❖ Avoid defining words or helping interpret meaning of items (clinician should redirect to standard instructions)
- ❖ Limit distractions

# Administration, continued



- ❖ Time: 60-90 minutes is typical for average to above-average intelligence
- ❖ May take 2+ hours for less others
- ❖ Can break into several sessions if necessary
- ❖ Should never be taken without supervision, *especially* in forensic contexts

# Scoring the MMPI-2



- ❖ Hand scoring
- ❖ Computer scoring
  - Following computerized administration
  - Keyboard entry
  - Scanning
- ❖ Converting raw scores to *T*-scores
  - Uniform *T*-scores: Clinical, RC, Content, Content Component, PSY-5
  - Linear *T*-scores: all other scales

# Interpretation



- Interpretation is based on patterns across scales, rather than examining a single score in isolation
- *High* scores and *Low* scores vary by scale
  - ▣ Manual & texts offer specific cut scores by scale
  - ▣ In general, elevations above 65-70 *T* are considered “high” or clinically significant

# MMPI-2 Scales

- \*Validity scales
- \*Clinical Scales
  - ▣ Harris-Lingoes
- Content Scales
  - ▣ Content Component Scales
- Restructured Clinical (RC) Scales
- PSY-5 Scales
- Supplementary Scales

\*can be scored with first 370 items

# Notable Scales / Supplementary Scales in Forensic Assessment



- Validity Scales
- Specific Clinical Scale code-types (e.g., 4-9)
- Overall level of maladjustment
- Substance abuse supplementary scales
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Anger / correlates with physical aggression

# Interpretation, continued

- Multiple scales = wide variety of strengths and weaknesses in psychometric properties
  - ▣ For example: test-retest coefficients range from 0.56-0.93 on Clinical Scales
- Temporal stability also impacted as instrument measures current emotional status

“This is particularly true in clinical settings in which individuals are experiencing heightened levels of distress that might be expected to decrease over time...”

(Graham, 2012, p. 235)



# Strengths of the MMPI-2 in forensic settings



- + Vast body of empirical research
- + Standardized administration, scoring & interpretation
- + Relative ease in administration & scoring
- + Sophisticated validity scales
  - + Low face validity
  - + Detects deviant test-taking attitudes
- + Meets Daubert standard *when used to address issues relevant to current mental state*

# Weaknesses in forensic settings



- Test development lacked theoretical foundation
- Reading level can be problematic
- Lack of norms for specific forensic groups
- Caution use with ethnic minorities
  - Research mixed: stronger support for African Americans but more research needed with Hispanic groups
- Very little support for using MMPI-2 to predict behavior or match individuals with prototypes

# Wrap-up



- MMPI-2 has strong empirical support for use in forensic assessment
- Provides useful data in evaluating defendant's approach to psychological inquiry, current emotional functioning, and several indicators that can assist in predicting maladjustment and risk
- However: does not directly predict dangerousness / violence or offer information on retrospective functioning (e.g.: GEI)



Questions / Comments...

# References / Resources

- Butcher, JN, Graham, JR, Ben-Porath, YS, Tellegen, A, Dahlstrom, WG, & Kaemmer, B. (2001). MMPI-2 (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2): Manual for administration, scoring, and interpretation, revised edition. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Graham, JR. (2012). MMPI-2: Assessing personality and psychopathology (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
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- Melton, GB, Petrila, J, Poythress, NG, & Slobogin, C. (2007). Psychological evaluations for the courts: A handbook for mental health professionals and lawyers (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: The Guilford Press.